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*A Primary History: Stories of Heroism.* By WILLIAM H. MACE, Professor of History in Syracuse University. Chicago: Rand, McNally & Co., 1910. Cloth. 8vo, pp. 396.

This book gives a simple and interesting story of American history by means of biographies, grouped according to periods. The purpose of the author has been "to bring before the mind of the pupils a series of great historical characters. These men do interesting things from the beginning to the end of life. Because their deeds are concrete and physical, they are easily pictured in imagination." The biographies are unusually well selected to give various types of heroism, emphasizing the services rendered to the country by overcoming great obstacles in its industrial development as well as by fighting its battles.

The author has wisely taken advantage of the charm always attached to biography. Children are not attracted by a brief, summarized treatment of events. It is the dramatic personal story that arouses interest. This is a principle well understood by teachers but rarely followed by writers of textbooks.

Professor Mace has not only written entertaining stories of the great men who made the nation but has also related these stories in such a way as to give a connected study of our history. Better still, each character is presented with some background of social environment which brings the child nearer to the understanding of historical problems than the mere story. However, the book covers too much ground to be entirely successful. The child's imagination cannot picture the social situation in any period without more detailed statements. For this reason it is doubtful if any one-volume textbook covering the whole of American history can ever be satisfactory. At least, such a textbook should be used in connection with supplementary reading offering fuller treatment of social life.

The style of this book is so vivid, simple, and clear that children of the fourth and fifth grades read it easily and enjoy it thoroughly. It is well illustrated with both pictures and maps.

E. J. R.

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*Practical Agriculture.* By JOHN W. WILKINSON, A.M., Assistant State Superintendent of Oklahoma. Chicago: American Book Co., 1910.

This elementary and very much condensed treatise on agriculture, horticulture, forestry, stock-feeding, animal husbandry, and road-building forms a very interesting and instructive book for public-school use. Some historical matter concerning certain phases of agriculture is introduced, besides occasional statistical tables which are based on the most recent investigations by the government and state experiment stations. Every chapter contains valuable information and helpful suggestions, especially those dealing with fertilizers and the propagation and improvement of plant varieties. The criticism which may be applied to the whole book, namely, too superficial treatment, applies particularly to the chapters on horticulture with its subdivisions of vegetable, flower, and landscape gardening, and fruit growing. One finds himself wishing that the author had left out such subjects as "Civic Improvement," "Roads," and "Fuel and Light," which are so closely related to agriculture, and allowed more space for further development